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THE CHURCH, THE BIBLE, AND THE CREED

BY
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TO
ELLEN DOUGLAS CUNNINGHAM GAILOR
IN GRATEFUL COMMEMORATION
OF OUR THIRTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY

FOREWORD

These lectures were delivered as a regular Lenten course in Trinity Chapel, New York City, and are intended to give a simple historical outline of the Church's fundamental faith. They are published at the request of many of the clergy and laity, who heard them: and I venture to append a list of books, which some may wish to read for wider and completer study of the subjects I have treated.

THOS. F. GAILOR.

LIST OF BOOKS

The Approach to the New Testament, JAMES MOFFATT, D.D.
The Reign of Relativity, VISCOUNT HALDANE.
The Gospel History and its Transmission, F. CRAWFORD BURKITT, D.D.
Problems of Modern Science, 1923, edited by ARTHUR DENDY, D.Sc., F. R. S.
The Canon of the New Testament, B. F. WESTCOTT, D.D., D.C.L.
Belief in God, BISHOP CHARLES GORE.
Belief in Christ, BISHOP CHARLES GORE.
The Holy Spirit and the Church, BISHOP CHARLES GORE.
Essays on Supernatural Religion, BISHOP LIGHTFOOT.
Irenaeus of Lugdunum, F. R. M. HITCHCOCK, D.D.
Authority in the Church, T. B. STRONG, D.D.
Immanence, J. R. ILLINGWORTH, D.D.
Freedom of the Mind in History, HENRY OSBORNE TAYLOR.
Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion, DEAN W. R. INGE.
Ecumenical Councils, W. P. DUBOSE, S.T.D.
Religion Since the Reformation, LEIGHTON PULLAN, D.D.
From Augustus to Augustine, ERNEST G. SIHLER, Ph.D.

LECTURE I

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE first subject we must consider in any discussion of Christianity is not what we or other writers think of it, but what does the Christian Religion claim to be, and how do we know anything about its origin and its claims?

Therefore, it is of prime importance that we should remember that the religion of Christ is not a system of philosophy or morals, which has been interpreted and expounded from time to time by individual writers who have believed it or have been interested in it; but it is an institution—an organized society—having its own records, its own creeds and rites and usages. It is like the government of the United States. You may study its documents—the history of its growth, the manner and method of its administration; but first of all you must recog-

nize the existence of the government as a living, operating fact, and your interpretation of the documents and history will be affected inevitably by what you know about the government.

So our first step in the effort to understand Christianity is to realize that it began as an organized institution, a society distinct from other societies in the world.

Professor Burkitt, of Cambridge, England, one of the latest and ablest critics of the New Testament, says in his recent lectures, "The history of Our Lord's ministry is the history of the birth of the Christian Church." "This Society was formed by Jesus Christ Himself." He proceeds to show, from St. Mark's Gospel, that after the incident of the healing of the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath Day, Our Lord broke off relations with official Judaism and founded His own Society. As Prof. Burkitt says, "After St. Mark III, 6, a new era in the ministry is opened. From that moment be-

gins the separate existence of the embryo Church."

The existence of the Church is taken for granted in the other writings of the New Testament. We read in St. Luke's Gospel (VI, 13) that Our Lord selected twelve of His disciples and named them Apostles. Here begins the formal organization. St. Matthew tells us that Our Lord declared that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church (XVI, 18), and the parables of the Kingdom, while we cannot press their details, all imply the conception of an ordered society, with differentiation of function. We are told by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles that Our Lord remained on earth forty days after the Resurrection, speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom, and it is probable that what they did afterwards in perfecting the organization of the Church was in obedience to His commands. Anyhow the history in the Acts and the Epistles of St. Paul shows the existence of an organized society. The appointment of Matthias in the place of Judas, the

appointment of the seven deacons, the confirmation of the people of Samaria after Philip had baptized them, the sending forth of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, and the ordination of elders in every Church—all these incidents take for granted without any argument the fact that the Christian Religion was an organized Society or Church and nothing else, quite distinct from Judaism or any Gentile organization.

Since that time, it is sufficient to say, there can be no doubt in the mind of any man who reads the records. Christianity has come down through all the centuries as an organized society. The early Apologists in their defense of the religion emphasize this fact, and it is of vital importance to us in our estimate of our religion today.

We may ask, then, what was the function, the significance, of the Church, according to the documents which it has brought down to us and upon which it bases its claims?

(1) The Church claims to be a spiritual society—human in its administration in-

deed, but guarded by divine sanctions. It is not a mere voluntary society—a club or association. It represents a definite act or commission from God, and it was endued with the Holy Spirit. It took its origin from and is a continuation of the Jewish Church. For the religion of the Jews assumed as its fundamental conception, the sovereignty of God.

Christ Himself maintained in the strongest way that He was sent by God. He came forth out of God; so that rejection of Him was rejection of the Father. The mission of Christ and the founding of the Church was a new act of God, continuous organically with what had gone before in the experience of the Jewish race, and therefore quite intelligible to the Jews and to those familiar with their history. So St. Paul says that Christ is the first-born of all creation; in Him were created all things in the heavens and on the earth. All things have been created through Him and unto Him. He is before all things and in Him all things consist, and He is the Head of the Body, the Church

(Col. I, 15, 18). So the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Hebrews.

In other words, the Church is a divine Society, instituted by God, to reveal and carry on His purpose for the whole world, because it is the instrument, the body, of the Eternal Son, through Whom the reconciliation with God may be achieved by the indwelling power of God the Holy Spirit. Indeed, St. Paul says that to be baptized into the Church is to be baptized into Christ (I Cor. XII, 13; Gal. III, 27). Such is the august, the lofty, sublime conception of the Church, as described by the writers of the New Testament.

(2) We must ask then, how did the Apostles, men with their human limitations, but believing in the grace and power given them by the Holy Spirit, try to put these ideas in practice in the world of every-day life?

Our attention is called at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles to the manifestations of new power resulting from the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, not upon individuals but upon the corporate

Church: and St. Peter's sermon, after reciting the fact of the Resurrection of Christ, called upon the people to repent and be baptized. Thereupon, the record runs, about three thousand souls were added to them by baptism, and "They continued stedfastly" in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers. Perhaps the most beautiful and striking illustration of the practical, every-day Church life of the early Christians is furnished by St. Luke's incidental account of the conditions of the Church at Ephesus.

We are told in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, that St. Paul administered Christian Baptism to the disciples at Ephesus and laid his hands on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. He also remained there teaching for more than two years, and probably, before he left, organized the Church and ordained elders, as was his custom in other places (*cf.* Acts XIV, 23). St. Luke does not describe the duties or functions of these elders. There was no need to do so. The Church people for whom

he was writing were familiar with the work assigned to these officers.

Now it happened that St. Paul, quite a long time afterwards when on his way to Jerusalem, decided to stop at Miletus, the seaport of Ephesus, and give some directions about the Church in that place. So he sent for the Elders of the Church at Ephesus and they came to Miletus, and St. Paul's address to them is one of the most beautiful and touching things in the book. He refers to their position as overseers or Bishops, and to their authority, which had been given them by the Holy Spirit, and he exhorts them to take heed to themselves and to the flock; to shepherd the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. He warns them against false teaching, reminding them how he himself had taught them for three whole years.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that his use of the word "flock" may be a memory of Our Lord's reported saying in St. Luke, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Undoubtedly this Church as Ephesus had a special place in the affection of St. Paul. He wrote a great letter to "the faithful in Christ Jesus who are at Ephesus," and towards the close of his life, he wrote two letters to Timothy, who had been placed in charge of that Church. And in all these letters there is a maturity and fulness of doctrinal statement to be expected in letters addressed to well-instructed Christians.

(3) There are two more characteristics of the Church as referred to in the New Testament, which deserve notice.

First of all, it was a witness to a fact. Matthias was elected as an Apostle in order that he might bear witness to the Resurrection. Indeed, this is a charge laid upon the Apostles by Our Lord Himself (Acts I, 8).

The importance of this is that the Christian Society—the Church—claimed at the very first to be entrusted with the evidence for a fact which transcends ordinary human experience, and which, having occurred at a definite point in time, is a matter to be borne witness to by historical testimony. But this

testimony is borne not by isolated individuals, but by the whole corporate Society. Indeed the Society exists as a witness to the fact without which the Society would never have continued to be. Therefore the entire worship and teaching of the Society is based on this fact, its sacramental life, and its formal creed.

Once more, the Church from the first has the charge to be Catholic. The witness is to be borne not only in Judea and Jerusalem, but unto the ends of the earth. To quote Dr. Strong's book on "Authority in the Church," "It was only by degrees that the Apostles learned the meaning of this. But when they had once realized the unity of the Church, they seemed to have felt the need of something like uniformity in practice. Paul and Silas, after the Council of Jerusalem, went the round of the Churches which St. Paul had visited on his first journey, and delivered to them to keep the decrees which had been determined by the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem (Acts XVI, 4)."

That Christianity began its work in the

world as an organized Church or fellowship is one of the plainest truths in history, if we accept its documents. As St. Luke says in the introduction to his Gospel, "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." The Church had already instructed him before the Gospel was written. But more than that, the Church, so far from being an accidental and negligible factor in the scheme of Christianity, is a vital and indispensable part of it. As Coleridge said long ago in his "Aids to Reflection," "Christianity without a Church is vanity and delusion."

This thought is common in the earliest Christian writings in the sub-Apostolic age. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was a contemporary of St. Paul himself, and was delivered to the wild beasts in Rome about the year 110, has left us seven letters in which he takes for granted the Catholic Church, name

and thing, and refers to its organization as a commonplace of Christian knowledge. And Irenaeus, who was a child at the time of the martyrdom of Ignatius, and became in the next generation the Bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, has left us this statement as to the accepted principles of the Christian Religion, viz: "It is the doctrine of the Apostles and the ancient system of the Church in all the world; and the character of the Body of Christ according to the successions of the Bishops to whom they (the Apostles) delivered the Church in each separate place; the complete use moreover of the Scripture which has come down to our time, preserved without corruption, receiving neither addition nor loss; its public reading without falsification; legitimate and careful exposition according to the Scriptures without peril and without blasphemy; and the preeminent gift of love" (IV, 33, 8). As Bishop Lightfoot says, we can learn more about early Christianity from Irenaeus than from all the German monographs that have appeared in the last fifty years.

One more quotation I must make, from the great Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, who was in no sense or degree a partisan or narrow-minded. He said in his sermon at the consecration of Truro Cathedral, 1888: "We are sometimes asked to think that the Church only exists in the union of believers and has no reality of its own. Now it is perfectly clear that in the New Testament the idea of the Church is not that. Men talk sometimes as if a Church could be constituted simply by Christians coming together and uniting themselves into one body for the purpose. Men speak as if Christians came first and the Church after; as if the origin of the Church was in the wills of individual Christians who compose it. But, on the contrary, throughout the teaching of the Apostles we see that it is the Church that comes first and the members of it afterwards. And the purpose of the succession of the Ministry is to make men feel the unity of the Body as it comes down the stream of history, and, if possible, to touch their hearts with some sense of that power

which the Lord bequeathed when He ascended up on high and gave gifts to men; with some sense of that undying life, which shall still, until He comes again, unite those who love Him with Himself, and spread the knowledge of His name throughout the human race." The Church takes its origin not in the will of man but in the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have felt obliged in this lecture to go over much familiar ground and insist upon the existence of the Church, as an organized Catholic institution, as an absolutely essential part of the Christian scheme; for it has been truly said that everybody is a true Churchman in the very same proportion as he is a true Christian. This is made necessary today, because some German Protestant scholars have seen fit to assert positively that it is inconceivable that any such conception of a universal Church could have existed in the minds of the first Christians; that the idea at best must have originated with St. Paul; that therefore we are at liberty to speculate and guess how such an idea

arose, how it came to capture and control the mind of a man like Irenaeus, for example, whose life reached back almost to the Apostolic age, in order to discredit it. The argument from silence has been pushed to the limit. If any piece of writing happens to be found in which the idea is not definitely expressed, immediately we are told, "he knew nothing about it," "never heard of it." Just as we are told, from time to time, "Paul never knew this," "never heard of that," because he does not happen to mention it in those of his writings which have come down to us.

And yet the Church was there. As Prof. Adolph Harnack admits, "The history of the Gospel contains two great transitions, viz: from Christ to the Brotherhood of believers in Christ, and from this to the incipient Catholic Church; and both of which fall within the First Century" ("Hist. of Dogma," I, 71).

Yes; the Church was there, however it may be accounted for. It was there in the time of Irenaeus, 170 A.D., and in the time

of Ignatius, 110 A.D., and as far back as the time when Paul and Silas went the round of the Christian communities announcing the decrees set forth by the Central Council at Jerusalem for them to obey.

Christianity started as a fellowship. Our Lord called two men to be His disciples (St. Mark I, 16) to begin with and not one at a time; and Christianity has been primarily a fellowship, a society, a Church, ever since. And that Church idea, that corporate conception of Christianity, needs to be emphasized today. As the Dean of St. Paul's says in that beautiful devotional book that has just been published:

"We do need another co-operative society to combat the society of co-operative guilt which the New Testament calls the world. We must help each other to make the right life possible in society. This is the true office of the Church, the bonds of which Christ meant to be mutual love and willing service . . . . and in the difficult times which are coming, Christians must above all things be true to their Master's teaching and methods. The results are not likely to be outwardly very striking: but an earnest and steady witness to the Gospel of

Christ, even on the part of a few persons, will be of immense value. For the world, even in the bad sense, is not wholly bad. It has a conscience, and it is not satisfied with itself. The hidden man of the heart in each man longs to play traitor to the prince of this world, and takes courage when he sees that he is not alone."*

We hear much talk today about Christianity without the Church, and a prominent editor says: "We want the religion of Jesus as a substitute for Christianity." But what is the religion of Jesus except as the Church has selected and presented the records and handed them down to us? If the teaching of any section of the Church is clearly inconsistent with the records, then that teaching should be rejected. But after all, the records, i. e., the Scriptures, are the Church's own chosen standards of appeal. We are not to be surprised if the practice of the Church includes some things not explicitly mentioned in the records—though not inconsistent with them. The existing government of the United States takes for granted many

*"Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion," p. 86.

things not referred to in the literature of the fathers.

It is easy to understand how important this is: for it is obviously impossible to be fair to the claims of Christianity without taking into account the fact that the documents, that is, the New Testament Scriptures, are only the fragmentary and partial records of a living, corporate Society; records which the Society has selected and preserved and handed down for its own use as a standard and criterion by which its teaching is to be judged and tried. The recognition of this relation of the Church to the New Testament is bound to change the whole attitude of our minds when we come to study the history, and without it we cannot do justice to the doctrine and practice of the religion.

As Bishop Westcott said ("Introduc. to the Canon of the N. T."):

"Our errors and misunderstandings as to the earliest ages of Christendom spring, I believe, most commonly from neglecting the life which underlies the fragmentary records. The testimonies which

can be gathered from the meager remains of a limited literature are the signs of the life of the Church and not the measure of it. It is true of the first centuries, as it is true of the present century, that we cannot understand the history of Christianity unless we recognize the action of the Holy Spirit through the Christian Society. It is through the active belief that He speaks and acts still as He spoke and acted then, not as we should expect beforehand, that we can yet 'win our souls in patience.'"

We believe, then, in the Holy Catholic Church, which was founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, and has had a continuous history from that day to this. Human arrogance and impatience have interrupted and broken its visible unity. Human ambition and worldliness have checked and retarded its Catholic conquest of the world by diverting the minds of its leaders to sectional and individual aggrandizement and power. It has indeed been human in its administration, and, as the Apostle said, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

Nevertheless, the Church has been God's agent for bearing witness, from generation to generation, to the Christian Revelation,

and has preserved for us the Holy Scriptures and the ancient Creed and Sacraments. It has been itself a challenge throughout the Christian centuries against war, against selfishness, against individualism, on behalf of the brotherhood of mankind. It has survived the attacks of enemies and the treason of false friends. It has lived through many persecutions and many political and social revolutions. As old Hugh Latimer said, "It is an anvil that hath worn out many a hammer." The variety and richness of its literature, and the long, unbroken line of its saints and confessors, bear witness to the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit of God. Yes, in spite of the weakness and imperfections of us, who represent it, the Church is still divine in its authorization, divine in its essential spirit of service to the world—the haven of safety, the pillar of faith, the home of peace, for the poorest and weakest, as for the best and noblest, of mankind.

LECTURE II

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

THE Christian Church claimed to be the continuation of the Jewish Church, and that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah of God.

Therefore naturally the Old Testament Scriptures, commonly known through the Greek translation, the Septuagint, was the Bible of the Church—although the Jewish teachers did not agree upon an exact list of Old Testament books until the Synod of Jamnia, 90 A.D.—and the Christians interpreted these Hebrew Scriptures in the light of the Christian Gospel, which was at once the fulfilment and the vindication of the Old Testament.

Our Lord Himself referred frequently to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, saying, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled." After His Resurrection, on the road to Em-

maus, He expounded the Scriptures to the two disciples, showing them the meaning of the prophecies concerning Himself. So St. Paul and the other Apostles refer to the Scriptures to justify their belief in Christ and His Resurrection as part of the divine plan of Redemption. As St. John says, "The disciples believed the Scriptures and the word which Jesus had said."

So Apollos was "mighty in the Scriptures," and St. Paul reminds Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation"; and he says that all Scripture inspired of God is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and out of them he proved that Jesus is the Christ.

This was the basis of the appeal that was made to the Jews, as we see illustrated especially in St. Paul's mission to the town of Berea in Macedonia. The local Jews, we are told, "were more noble (or unprejudiced) than those of Thessalonica, in that they re-

ceived the Word (as preached by Paul) with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed" (Acts XVII, 11).

So St. Peter, in his second Epistle (I, 17), speaks of his personal knowledge and sight of the Transfiguration of the Lord, and says that that experience made the Old Testament prophecies more sure to him; and he goes on to remind his readers that no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation.

Now, as Dr. Moffat says in his "Approach to the New Testament," the Christian Church claimed to possess the same Spirit as had inspired the Old Testament, and therefore very early, even in the writings of the New Testament themselves, there are indications that the Christian teachers are giving the same reverence to Apostolic writings as they were giving to the Old Bible. For example, St. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, quotes as Scripture a saying of Our Lord which we find recorded in St.

Luke's Gospel, viz: "The laborer is worthy of his hire." St. Paul not only quotes it as Scripture, but couples it with a passage from Deuteronomy, as if to show that it was Scripture in the same sense that the Old Testament was. So St. Peter speaks of the Epistles of St. Paul as in a true sense Scriptural documents, "which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

However, it was only by slow degrees that the Church selected the writings which were to be finally collected and authorized as the "New Testament," or rather the "New Covenant" with God, which was embodied once and for all in Jesus Christ.

The Church was alive and growing, and the intellect and conscience of the Christian communities were testing out the various documents, the letters, and sayings, which were being read for edification in the services of public worship. Some of these documents, like the Epistle of Clement and the Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of

Hermas, were finally discarded, but the process of discrimination and rejection was gradual and careful. Meanwhile, as Dr. Moffat says (p. 106), "The Church drew up a Creed, that is, a brief statement of Christian truth, which stated lucidly and regularly the meaning of the religion which was embodied in the sacred writings to guide the people in understanding what the New Testament really means, and (2) she put the teaching more and more under the supervision of the Bishops, as the representatives of Apostolic Orthodoxy, when schools of Christian teachers and thinkers became dangerous, and (3) encouraged the allegorical method of interpretation, in order to avoid some of the awkward difficulties raised by the literal text."

The gradual growth of formal and official recognition of the books which we now call the Bible is most interesting.

We have no complete and authorized list of the books earlier than the Fourth Century, but the casual references and quotations from the writings of the New Testa-

ment prove that the books were in common use.

These accidental references are found in the earliest Christian writers, beginning with Clement of Rome, whose extant letter to the Corinthians may be dated about the year 80. As Westcott says, "There is no reason to question the belief that Clement was an immediate disciple of the Christian Apostles and overseer of the Church of Rome. He died about the year 100. The powerful and lasting influence that he exercised is witnessed by the extensive literature that grew up bearing his name. The only universally accredited writing of his, however, is this first Epistle to the Corinthians, in the Greek language, that being the language of educated men in Rome at that period." The relation of this Epistle to our canonical books, as Westcott says, "is full of interest. In its style, in its doctrine, and in its theory of Church government, it confirms the genuineness of the disputed books of the New Testament." It is saturated in thought and language with the teaching of

St. Paul and St. Peter, and it shows a familiarity with the great outlines of Our Lord's life as given in the Gospels.

This Epistle was read in the service of the Church for many years, and was regarded with a reverence second only to that given to the writings of an Apostle.

Almost contemporaneous with Clement's letter are the seven Letters of Ignatius and the Letter of Polycarp, and following them almost immediately are the rather voluminous writings of Irenaeus, who was a pupil of Polycarp, and the writings of the lawyer, Tertullian, all coming within the Second Century. In addition to these, we have the fragmentary remains of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, a friend of Polycarp, the two Apologies of Justin Martyr, the Apology of Aristides, and many other fragmentary writings.

In some respects the most important of these remains for our purpose is a manuscript known as the Canon of Muratori, or the Muratorian Canon, which was discovered by Muratori, Librarian of Milan, in the

Ambrosian Library at Milan in 1740. Scholars agree upon its date as about 170 A.D. It is a Latin translation of an original Greek text, but is torn and mutilated, several pages being missing at the beginning and end. The extant pages of this manuscript give a general list of the writings which are read as Scripture in the Church, and all the books of the New Testament, as we now have them, are mentioned except the First Epistle of St. John, the First and Second of St. Peter, the Epistle of St. James, and that To the Hebrews; but the mutilated condition of the manuscript, and the uncertainty as to who was the author of it, render definite inference impossible.

Our conclusion, after a survey of the Christian literature during the century, or, we may say, during the seventy years immediately succeeding the age of the Apostles, is:

(1) Of the twenty-seven books composing the New Testament as we now have it,

all are referred to in the writings of this period, with possibly one exception, viz: the Second Epistle of St. Peter is not mentioned or quoted explicitly, though there is a doubtful reference to it.

(2) The evidence furnished by these writings to the books of the New Testament is, when we consider it, wonderfully full and extensive. Moreover it is given, as has been often said, in a way that is most convincing. The allusions to Scripture are perfectly natural. The quotations are prefaced by no apology or explanation. The language of the Scripture was so familiar as to have become a common dialect, and it is used by men of different character, even by those who wrote against Christianity, and in widely separated localities, with extraordinary consistency and lack of discrepancy. This harmony of thought and knowledge means inevitably a common rule and common consent. It is not the testimony of individuals, but the voice of the living, working, Catholic Church.

The end of the Second Century and the beginning of the Third Century show the Church awakening to a fuller consciousness of its universal corporate life. The Christian literature is more abundant and more formal. A common Christian vocabulary was being created. The opposition of outsiders was forcing a clearer statement of principles. The intellectual expression of the faith was becoming more definite and more sure.

The Third Century opens with two great names, both representing the Church in Alexandria, the center of the intellectual life of the Christian Church at that time. They were Clement and Origen. Clement was born in 165 and died in 220 A.D. Origen was born in 186 and died in 253 A.D. The surviving works of these fathers comprise several volumes. Clement's list of the books of the New Testament is preserved in Eusebius and one statement of his is specially interesting, viz: he declares that he had it from a sainted old presbyter that St. Paul had written the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Hebrew language, and that it was trans-

lated into Greek by St. Luke, and that this accounts for the smoothness and eloquence of the style and its resemblance to that of the Acts.

But Origen is the great name of this period. He was an omniverous student, of vast energy and intellectual activity. He is the first Biblical critic in history, and for about forty years he wrote and taught incessantly. Like the fathers who preceded him, he professed to repeat only the teaching he had received. His comments on the so-called disputed books are most valuable. He shows himself familiar with all the books of the New Testament as we know them, and his vast labors in writing out in parallel columns the Hebrew and Greek versions of the Old Testament are known to all.

There is one famous passage in Origen's commentary on St. Luke's Gospel which shows the existence of spurious gospels and the way they were regarded by the Church.

Origen says: "The Church has four Gospels—Matthew and Mark and Luke and John. Heresies have very many, of which

one is entitled 'According to the Egyptians,' another 'According to the Twelve Apostles.' But the four Gospels only are approved, out of which we must bring forth points of teaching under the person of Our Lord and Saviour . . . . In all this we approve nothing else but that which the Church approves" (Hom. I, "in Luc.").

We need not recite the evidence of later writers, as the literature becomes more and more extensive.

When Constantine became sole Emperor and, under the influence of his mother and his vision of the Cross, decided to favor Christianity, he ordered Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, to prepare fifty copies of the divine Scriptures, of which he judged the preparation and the use to be most necessary for the purpose of the Church, written on prepared skins, by the help of skilful artists, accurately acquainted with their craft. "To that end orders were issued to the Governor of the Province to furnish whatever was required for the work, and authority was given Eusebius to employ two pub-

lic carriages to convey the books to the Emperor."

This book, prepared for Constantine, 323 A.D., may be called the first real Bible, although the name Bible (*Biblia*) to denote the collection of books was first used by Chrysostom seventy-five years later.

Up to the time of Constantine various opinions had been expressed by individual writers as to the canonicity, i.e., the right to be included in the Scriptures, of five New Testament books, viz: the Epistles of James and Jude, Second of St. Peter, Second and Third of St. John, and the Apocalypse. St. Paul's authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews was also questioned. But after the preparation of this book for Constantine, reinforced a few years later by the list of Athanasius, the great leader of the Alexandrian Church, the difference between controverted and acknowledged Epistles was ignored except as a matter of history; and the books of the New Testament, as we know them, were universally accepted and used. The acts of several smaller diocesan

and provincial councils contained lists of the sacred books; but there is no reliable record of any Ecumenical Council having passed judgment on them. The Council of Carthage especially, presided over by the great Augustine in 397 A.D., may be said to have fixed both the Old Testament and the New Testament in their present form. St. Jerome's Latin translation of the Scriptures, the Vulgate, in 410 A.D., practically settled the Canon for the Western Church.

The Roman Catholic Church is the only historic Church which has undertaken to give a fixed and definite list of the books of Scripture as indisputable and canonical by conciliar decree, with an anathema attached. The Council of Trent (1545 A.D.) issued the decree listing the New Testament books as we have them, but including in the list of Old Testament books, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and 1 and 2 Maccabees. These books were included in the Greek (LXX) translation but not in the original Hebrew; and they were not recognized by Athanasius and his contempora-

ries as canonical Scripture. Moreover, the Council also put the unwritten traditions said to have been received from the Apostles upon the same level of authority as the written Scriptures themselves (4th Session).

The Church of England adopted a more liberal, or a more cautious, position, and in the VIth of the Articles of Religion—Articles which were set forth in the reign of Elizabeth to quiet the minds of those who were troubled about the attitude of the Reformed Church—declared that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required . . . . In the name of Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." Then follows a list of thirty-nine Old Testament books and twenty-seven of the New Testament. A list is also given of the books from the Greek Septuagint, commonly called "Apocrypha," including those declared canonical by the Council of Trent,

and they are recommended as "books to be read for example of life and instruction of manners."

These so-called Apocryphal books of the Old Testament abound in passages of great literary and spiritual beauty and power, and there is no good reason why they have been omitted from our Bibles. Many of the lessons ordered to be read in the Church service on Saints' Days are taken from them. They do not rank in importance for doctrinal teaching with the great prophetic writings of the old Testament, but they certainly have an historic place in the volume of Holy Scripture.

Thus it will appear that the Catholic Church as a whole has never issued an ecumenical decree setting forth a complete, authoritative list of the books of Scripture, but has preserved for us a collection of sacred books of varying character and importance which, to use the phrase of the councils, are to be read in the service of the Church. The Church has not encouraged us to regard this collection—this Bible—as

a book of magic, and has not taught that all the books are of equal authority and value. Nor has the Church defined the exact meaning of the words "Sacred" and "Holy" as applied to the books and the inspired authority that these words imply. All that the Creed says is that "the Holy Ghost spake by the Prophets."

The Christian fathers spoke of the Old Testament as "The Divine Library," and it contains history and poetry and prophecy and allegories and parables; but St. Paul says that they "are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and Our Lord Himself said, "They testify of Me." Dr. Sanday has beautifully described what this testimony is in his Bampton Lectures:

"How are we to bring together," he says, "those two parallel lines of prophecy, which exist side by side in the Old Testament but nowhere meet, the ideal King, the descendant of David, and the ideal Prophet, the suffering Servant of Jehovah? What have two such different conceptions in common with each other? They seem to move in different

planes, with nothing even to suggest their coalescence. We turn the page which separates the New Testament from the Old. We look at the Figure which is delineated there, and we find in it a marvellous meeting of traits derived from the most different and distant sources, from Nathan, from Amos, from First Isaiah, from Second Isaiah, from Zechariah, from Daniel, from the Second Psalm, from the Twenty-second, from the Sixty-ninth, from the Hundred-and-Tenth. And these traits do not meet, as we might expect them to do, in some labored and artificial compound, but in the sweet and gracious figure of Jesus of Nazareth—King, but not as men count kingship; crowned, but with the crown of thorns; suffering for our redemption, but suffering only that He may reign."

So may we find Him if we search for Him.

As for the New Testament, we may say that just as the Church herself is the creation, the offspring of that momentous and unprecedented event in human history, the Incarnation of God in Christ; so the Scriptures, which were written by men, whose souls were exalted by immediate personal experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in that unique and wonderful time, are the explanation and the corroboration

of the life and thought and purpose of the Catholic Church.

It has been well said that the Church cannot be defined like a geometrical figure by its limiting line, but is defined by its blazing center, from which true paths of light stream forth. So Our Lord's Life and Our Lord's teaching, like the Sun in Heaven, by the power of the Holy Spirit, irradiate and illumine both the Scriptures and the Church. And the Church invites and encourages the study of the Scriptures. They are her Scriptures—her own authorized credentials. They are the norm and standard of all her teaching. They are the Word of God to the Church, the record of His redeeming love, conveyed, to be sure, as the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "in many parts and many fashions," and not free from the imperfections which the limitations and infirmities of the human beings who wrote them naturally involve. But certainly they have proved themselves to be the Book of books in human history—the cradle of liberty, the fountain of free institutions, the destroyer of

despotisms, the friend of the people. Their inspired precepts have glorified the world's noblest literature and have enlightened the minds and comforted the hearts of the highest and humblest of mankind with the understanding of the secret of the Spiritual and Eternal life.

If men of reverent and humble and enquiring minds wish to investigate the sources and try to explain the ways and methods by which this or that part of the Bible came to be written, who can object? And so it has become the fashion with some scholars, for the past sixty years, to concentrate all their ingenuity and learning upon the critical study of these Scriptures, and especially of the Old Testament, and doubtless many interesting and perhaps helpful results have been obtained. But too often imagination has run away with reason, and speculation has replaced sound judgment. Pride of intellect has built fantastic theories, and arguments begun in unbelief have ended in unbelief; and unbelief is practical Atheism, and Atheism is despair.

But the Church lives, and the Bible grips the souls of men, not by the operation of one organ, the mind, but by faith of the whole personality in Jesus Christ. For the faith in Jesus is not merely intellectual; it is an act of the whole man, and the intellect plays only its proper and subordinate part. "The reasons for this Faith are incommunicable: they rest on personal relations deeper than intellect, deeper than words; but as time goes on, experience makes the faith and trust still stronger." It is ever the way when we love a person and know in our hearts that the love is returned. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned," and "We walk by faith and not by sight."

LECTURE III

THE CREED OF THE CHURCH

THE Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Temple, in his lectures to the Student Movement Conference, makes an admirable statement of the philosophical conditions under which we must conceive of a spiritual Revelation:

"There is no sort of intellectual or philosophical difficulty," he says, "in supposing that this universe is grounded in an infinite spiritual purpose and will; and there is no difficulty in principle about the occurrence of one particular manifestation of it in its perfect embodiment. But it cannot be an intellectual statement or doctrine, because such a doctrine would either be a very partial formula or else surpass our capacity to apprehend. Such manifestation is only possible in one way. It is only possible in a Life."

Therefore the whole intellectual expression of Christianity centers in and grows out of the study and understanding of the life

of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The writings of the New Testament are moral and spiritual expositions and interpretations of that Life. The Church is the manifestation of that Life by human agencies. "We have the treasure in earthen vessels."

It must be remembered that Christianity has always claimed and still claims to be the absolute religion; that is, it is not one more expression of the religious instinct of mankind, but the Revelation, once for all, of what that instinct means and of what is its object and satisfaction. Christ is all.

The truth must also be recognized that in speaking of the doctrines of Christianity we are speaking of the revelation of truths objective to us; not truths which are the result of our own reasoning, but that have been brought to us from outside our own consciousness and investigation. Human reason may approve them, but it did not invent them.

It has been well said that "the fact that I believe in God is of very little consequence to anyone but myself. The important thing

is that there is a God to believe in." When Dr. Jowett, the Master of Balliol, was asked, "What do you think about God?" he answered, "That is unimportant. The only thing that signifies is what does God think about me." So it is reported of Abraham Lincoln, that when someone said, "Don't you think that God is on our side," he replied, "My hope is that we are on God's side."

I emphasize this objective truth because many today seem to be so occupied in a psychological analysis of their own thoughts and feelings that they have lost sight of the existence of objective and eternal Truth.

Bishop Temple quotes the words of a great spiritual teacher who said: "There used to be a thing called Theology, which is Greek for thinking about God. It is very old-fashioned now. Instead of that there is a thing called the philosophy of religion, which means thinking about your own nice feelings. It is very popular."

However, in the New Testament and in the history of the early Church we are face

to face with God. And that makes all the difference in the world.

What the Christians gathered out of the New Testament, what was their common understanding of the principles of their religion, is stated with remarkable clearness and freshness in the Epistle to Diognetus. This letter or address to Diognetus is anonymous, but it is generally acknowledged as a Christian document of the highest value, dated about the year 117 A.D., very close to Apostolic times. The author makes this statement of the common faith of the Christian Church, viz:

"Our faith was not a discovery of this world; but God Himself, the Almighty and Invisible Creator, has sent down from heaven to men His holy and incomprehensible Truth and Word, Him Who was the very Maker and Builder of all. . . . If you love Him you will imitate His kindness . . ., and he who bears a brother's burden and shares of his abundance to them that want, does the work of God."

What finer or truer interpretation of Christianity could we have than that—and it was written in the simplicity of his faith

by a Christian man, less than twenty years after the death of St. John.

It would be easy to multiply quotations to show that the Christian Church of the first age was simply vibrating, glowing, with the consciousness of God's revelation of Himself as Love in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Therefore the members of the Church were too much occupied with the practice of their religion, with worship and service—the worship of the Risen and Ascended Lord and the service of kindness and goodness to their fellow-men—to think about the formulation of doctrine or the subtleties of philosophical definition.

There can be no question that the power of the Christian Church, the power that won her victory over Paganism, was the power of the good life. Human life is sacramental. It has been well said that "Spirit alone, with no material embodiment, accomplishes little or nothing in this world . . . . It is only when some concrete embodiment is found, that spirit becomes real and active." And

the faith of the early Christians, manifested in the virtue and beneficence of their every-day life, was the outward expression of that sacramental worship which we are told they steadfastly maintained week by week, thereby "showing the Lord's death till He come."

Thus again we must bear in mind that the life of the Christian society in stimulating faith and shaping conduct—is vastly more important than the intellectual study of the documents and the inferences to be drawn from them.

Yet it was inevitable that the Church should have a Creed. "A man is not a Christian because he claims the right to believe, but because he does believe. And an association of those who believe must sooner or later compose a definition of their faith" (Pullan, p. 186). A man's conduct and character are the register and declaration of his creed. So the Creed of the Church was the simplest possible summary of the principles which constituted the rule of the Christian life. Clement of Alexandria calls it "The

Church's Rule." Irenaeus calls it "The Rule of Truth." And Tertullian calls it "The Rule of Faith."

There was a body of ascertained Truth which was called "the Faith." St. Paul says, "Stand fast in the Faith," and "Abide in the Faith." "I have kept the Faith," and "Some have erred concerning the Faith." Indeed he says to Timothy, "Hold fast the form (or pattern) of sound words which thou hast heard of me." So St. Jude says, "Contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered."

In the collection of ordinances and customs known as "the Apostolical Constitution," of doubtful origin and authority sometime in the Fourth Century, it is said that "the Catholic Teaching" or Rule of Faith was drawn up by the Twelve Apostles, with St. James and St. Paul. It is an interesting tradition, showing the reverence that was felt for this simple rule of faith which we call the Apostles' Creed, and which undoubtedly was current, in forms varying in slight details, throughout the Church in the sub-Apostolic period.

It was not, however, until the age of the Councils, in the years 325 A.D. and 381 A.D., that the Catholic Church undertook, through its representatives in Council assembled, to set forth by authority a Creed which was to be accepted by all true Christians throughout the world; and even then it was forced upon the Church by the misstatements and misinterpretations of the opponents of Christianity. Neither the Council of Nice nor the Council of Constantinople claimed the authority to create a Creed. They explicitly declared that they were only bearing witness to what had been the Rule of Faith from the beginning; and where they used a word like "consubstantial" Ὁμοούσιος, that could not be found in Scripture, they were forced to use it to meet and contradict the erroneous and mischievous subtleties of the adversaries of the Faith.

The whole emphasis of the Creed is concentrated on the Life in which the Revelation from God came. It deals primarily with the Person and character of the Lord

Jesus Christ. Whereas there were those who said that there was only a partial presence of Divinity, the Church declares, "Perfect God." Where they said that the Humanity was lost in the Divinity, the Church said, "Perfect Man." It is one thing to confess that Christ was conscious of a unique indwelling of God, and quite a different thing to confess that in Him was the fulness of the Godhead. And the Church had to declare it.

Thus the Creed, in safeguarding the Person of Christ, really safeguards the Christian revelation of God; for the heresy of Arius was not merely that he denied the divinity of Christ, but that he held that God is too exalted and transcendant to be related to the universe except through an intermediary. In other words, he said that He Who came so near as to mingle Himself with the world, and Who so humbled Himself as to become incarnate in man, could not be the Most High God Himself (Du Bose, p. 96).

And this heresy is evident today in the teaching of more than one growing sect.

And yet it contravenes the most precious truth of religion, viz: that God is in His world. He is in nature and is the force of nature, and His incarnation in the Christ is the guarantee and witness that we men and women are akin to God. He took not on Him the nature of Angels but the nature of man, as the Epistle to the Hebrews says. And this is the assurance to us also of the validity of our human reason and our human spiritual ideals. It affects the whole of life, our attitude towards our fellows and our outlook on the world. It lays upon us the responsibility of infinite progress and the burden of a divine destiny. The Incarnation of God in Christ—the perfect man—is the promise and prophecy of God's ultimate incarnation in the human race itself.

The facts in the Life of Our Lord are stated in the Creed with clear and positive distinctness. Mystical religions had been gaining ground among the people, like the

religion of Mithras, and the worship of Cybele and the various Egyptian cults, and all of them were religions of myth and the personification of the forces of Nature and the allegorical interpretation of the facts of history. But the Christian Creed is bold and straightforward in its appeal to the actual and acknowledged facts in Our Lord's life. He was born of a Virgin and her name was Mary, and He suffered at a particular time under Pontius Pilate.

At a time when the representatives of other religions were talking continually in mystic language, weaving imaginary legends, and delighting in their common watchword, "These things we talk about—these events—never really happened but the ideas they stand for are true," at such a time it was wonderful to mark the strict simplicity of the facts—the actual, historic facts, as stated in the Creed—facts, we must remember, not dependent for their evidence merely upon the written Gospels, but also upon the consistent and uninterrupted witness of the Catholic Church.

Some of these facts are what are commonly called "miraculous." Therefore we must understand what, in Christian speech, that word means.

It does not mean contrary to Nature or to the laws of Nature. Nature, as we Christians understand it, is the manifestation of the will of God, and we speak of the uniform processes of Nature as laws, because they were imposed by the Divine Will.

Any exceptional and unusual event, in the order of nature as we have learned it, if it carries with it an exceptional and unusual moral and spiritual purpose, may be understood as a direct revelation to us that the *moral will of God is supreme in the world,* however it may be veiled and hidden from us ordinarily by the operation of secondary causes.

This is what we claim for the so-called miraculous events stated in the Creed.

After all, it is a question as to whether there is such a thing as free personal will in the universe. We believe that man has the precious gift of moral freedom, limited,

indeed, but real, and manifested in every department of his life and work. This human freedom is the highest and truest witness in nature to the personality and free will of God, the Creator and Source of life. There is perfect free-will and perfect reason in God.

The alternative to this is a blind, mechanical universe, subject to a dumb Fate, a clammy and irrational conception of the scheme of things, where there is no freedom in man or God.

As Bishop Gore says, "The question of the reality of moral freedom and the question of the credibility of miracles are at the bottom one and the same question."

The moral and spiritual issues involved justified the special manifestation of God's Will, for example, in the Virgin Birth of Christ.

If we grant that there was or could have been an Incarnation of God, then it certainly constituted a creative epoch in the history of humanity. As Dr. W. P. DuBose says:

"Because Jesus Christ is at once the most divine and the most human fact and factor in the history and experience of our race, the problem of His Person became at once the impulse and starting-point of an entire science of God, of man, and of the essential and final relations between God and man." "In the womb of the Virgin, the Holy Ghost is not the divine Begetter nor the divine Begotten; but reveals His operation in the grace of the human conception and child-bearing. The Holy Ghost is mother, not of the act by which the Word, the Logos of God, became flesh, but of the preparation and ability of the flesh to be assumed by the Word. . . . By the Word, the Logos, God begets; by the Spirit humanity conceives and bears; through both God is incarnated and humanity is regenerated and redeemed" ("Councils" I, 31).

As Dr. John P. Peters used to say: There is no explanation that can be given of how and when life came into matter. Every experiment to get life from matter itself has failed. Whenever it came, it came as a Virgin Birth. Prof. Tyndall said that the gulf between the interaction of the brain molecules and the fact of consciousness never could be bridged. And we say that whenever the animal, man, became endowed with

mental and moral self-consciousness, it was a Virgin Birth. However, the Church has no quarrel even with those who accept the theory of evolution in its extreme form and who believe that these gaps in the process, viz: the development of organic matter from inorganic and of rationality out of animal mind, may some day be closed by the discovery of new facts, although the very latest statement of professional scientific experts is that "as to the question of the ancestry of man, its final solution, if solved it ever will be, is not yet in sight" (Dr. Barclay-Smith, in "Problems of Science").

Let us accept the theory of evolution; but evolution originates nothing, invents nothing, causes nothing. "It is only a name for the gradual way in which God's purposes are unfolded in the field of existence; and the gradual way whereby in the field of knowledge they came to be recognized by man" (Illingworth); in other words, the gradual way in which God is working, and the gradual way in which we find it out. As Aristotle said long ago, "The beginning

must be interpreted by the end"; and the intellectual, moral, and spiritual nature of man, no matter what was the process of its evolution, came from an intellectual, moral, and spiritual source. Whoever made the acorn made the tree. The theory of evolution not only does not contradict the idea or fact of God; it is absolutely impossible without God.

The loose talk of a lot of would-be philosophers has assumed for the theory of evolution vastly more than any real, thoroughgoing scientist would ever claim. As Henry Bergson says: "I see in the whole evolution of life on our planet a crossing of matter by a creative consciousness, an effort to set free, by force of ingenuity and invention, something which in the animal still remains imprisoned, and is only finally released when we reach man." (See Gore, p. 59.)

The Church's doctrine of spiritual reality can never conflict with the proved results of physical science. They move in different planes.

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where the cave-men dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod;
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

"Like tides on a crescent sea-beach,
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling and surging in;
Come from the mystic ocean,
Whose rim no foot has trod,
Some of us call it Longing,
And others call it God."

It was some time before the thinkers of the Church came to realize the true significance and importance of the Virgin Birth as the starting point of that new creation in Christ, of which St. Paul speaks in the second letter to the Corinthians: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away and all things are become new.

But the statement of the fact itself and

the insistence upon it, even by heretics outside the Church, as an acknowledged truth of history, are continuous from the first. The earliest Christian Creed contains it. It is stated with emphasis by Ignatius, who was a contemporary of the Apostles, and by Aristides and Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus and Tertullian, all in the second century, and they refer to it as a well-established part of the Christian tradition.

St. Mark's Gospel, it is true, begins with Our Lord's baptism and does not mention the boyhood or infancy: but on the other hand, it is St. Mark who tells us that the people called Jesus "the Son of Mary." St. Luke's account of the infancy is one of the most delicate and beautiful narratives in the literature of the world; a story, as Dr. Sanday has said, that was evidently told by a woman from a woman; and this witness of St. Luke has become more weighty and conclusive since eminent critics today are making powerful arguments to show that St. Luke's is the Gospel upon which both St. Mark and St. Matthew largely based their

narratives, and that St. Luke got his information from St. John. (See art. by the Rev. W. Lockton in "Ch. Quart. Rev.," July, 1922.) As for St. Paul's failure to mention explicitly the Virgin Birth, we can only say that he certainly expressed belief in the Divine Personal pre-existence of Our Lord, and in at least two of his letters (Rom. I, 3, and Gal. IV, 4) uses phraseology that is most apposite to a belief in the Virgin Birth. He certainly believed that God was made man, and not that a man was made God! And that is the real question at issue. Anyhow, there is no break nor exception to the witness borne by the whole Church in every age, and while it is possible to distinguish in thought between the fact of the Incarnation and the fact of the Virgin Birth, "there is," as Dr. Bernard says, "a congruity between the two beliefs which cannot be explained away."

This and the other articles of the Creed come to us as the mature judgment of the Catholic Church, the basis and foundation

of all that she has taught and all that she has done for the moral and spiritual benefit of mankind.

Upon these articles of the Creed, and growing out of them, has been built up by great thinkers and teachers a body of doctrine, a real science of God and man, which we call theology; but the Creed, with its simple and clear statements, is the only defined Truth which has been set forth by the authority of the whole Church.

It defines with sufficient clearness the Revelation of God's Person and Nature, and His relation to us.

It imposes upon us no hard, mechanical system, but leaves us room for the exercise of our own reason and understanding in applying these fundamental truths to the problems of each succeeding age.

Finally it puts the emphasis upon our loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ; for Christ is all. He furnishes and He is, the new motive and the new end of life, the satisfaction of the intellect and heart and conscience of mankind.

Some, perhaps many, will not accept this solution of the world's problems and will not acknowledge this allegiance. We cannot help it. We have learned through Christ the law of love for all mankind. We think that we are trying to obey that law and we bow our heads humbly before the criticisms of those who charge us with weakness and unworthiness. We admit that the Church, human in its administration, has not fulfilled or persuaded its people to fulfil all that law of love and brotherhood; but we also claim that the record of history gives credit to the Church for a beneficent and saving influence. And as we look out upon a discontented, distracted world today, we can see no power to help it, no hope to encourage it, no light to guide it, but Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

LECTURE IV

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

I HAVE said in the previous lecture that the Creed contains the only statement of Revealed Truth that the Catholic Church has formally set forth as the fundamental and necessary faith of a Christian; but there is one doctrine which is so obviously implied in this summary of the Faith, that it deserves a fuller exposition; and that doctrine we know as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Our age seems to be impatient of any intellectual definition of Spiritual Truth, and we are being warned constantly by writers on the subject of religion not to insist upon dogmas, as though dogma, which is nothing more than the definite statement of the truth, were somehow incompatible with spiritual experience. But as men and women who are endowed with reason, we are obliged, as the Apostle says, to give a rea-

son for the hope that is in us. Either we know something about God and Christ, or we do not know anything. If we say that we do know, then we are committed to dogma and we cannot help stating it.

The primary and fundamental dogma of Christianity is this: The Eternal Son of God, for us men and for our salvation, was made man and lived a human life. The Church has preserved for us through nineteen centuries a brief record of His Life on earth and His sayings about God and man. In these sayings He has revealed more about the nature of God than man has discovered or could discover by himself, and He definitely referred to God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Church, firmly convinced that, in doing so, she was guided by the Holy Spirit, formulated this teaching for the purpose of transmission through the ages in terms which were justified by the record.

The immediate disciples of Christ speak of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

as three distinguishable Persons; and yet these Persons are so mutually inclusive, so absolutely inseparable in their operation, that there is but One God. The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Spirit, yet these three are one.

It is not necessary to make extensive quotations from the New Testament to prove these two propositions. The Gospels, Acts, and Epistles abound in illustrations of their truth.

And it is important to note that this simple belief in God as Father, Son, and Spirit, originating, as it did, in the unreasoned acceptance of the example and teaching of Christ, has been found, after centuries of reflection and actual experiment, to be the most practically efficient conception of God that has appeared in the world. It has satisfied the demands of reason. It has brought the truth of the Divine Personality home to men in a new and unique degree. It has furnished the basis of a Christian philosophy of life and action unrivalled in the history of human thought.

We must emphasize the fact that in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity, as in that of the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, the facts came first, and only slowly, by degrees, did the Christian leaders construct a theology which took account of and interpreted the facts. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are names for God throughout the New Testament, and each One is referred to as a Person, and yet not as separate from one another, but as having one being, one mind, and one activity. St. John says that the promised coming of the Spirit involves Christ's coming; for the other Paraclete is not to be a substitute for Christ's absence, but the agent of His presence. So also Our Lord says that His own coming is the Father's coming. "We will come unto you" (St. John XIV, 16).

The average Christian found this conception of God true for his actual, everyday life. He simply lived the truth of it. God was his loving Father, and he realized this in the communion and fellowship of the

Body of Christ, the Church, where he felt the power of the Divine Presence by the operation of the Holy Spirit. He did not reason it out; he knew. And this kind of living faith produced the great Saints of Christendom—men and women who ventured all for Christ, to whom to live was Christ and to die was gain, who inaugurated the innumerable philanthropies and charitable activities that have blessed the world. They built hospitals for the sick, homes for the poor, asylums for the blind and mentally diseased. They left home and country and abandoned all the joy and comfort of social and family life, and devoted themselves gladly to the great adventure of Christ for God. As we read in the Acts, "They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name." And in the quiet and humble walks of life, as citizens and fathers and husbands, and as wives and mothers, and sons and daughters, their lives shed abroad a benignant and beneficent light which those who saw and felt it knew to be a light that came from

Heaven. And in ten thousand ways today these lives are being lived and this witness is being borne, whether the world is willing to believe it or not; and the consecration and unselfish love of Christian Missions shines today with as fine a heroism as any that ever illuminated the pages of the history of the Church of God.

This, we claim, was and is the practical effect in human life of that faith in the Incarnation of God to which we give intellectual expression in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Out of the life, therefore, out of the daily experience, the intellectual formulation of doctrine grew. It was true here, as it was true of all Our Lord's sayings, that although sometimes they appeared to be paradoxes, when they were studied and applied they commended themselves to the reason. Just as the Lord said: "He that willeth to do My will shall know the doctrine."

It was inevitable that Christian thinkers should meditate upon Our Lord's revelation

of God and endeavor to arrive at a formula that would conveniently express it and hand it on for use in catechetical teaching; but they realized fully the inadequacy of any human words accurately to convey the meaning of the mystery. For of course the doctrine of the infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient God is bound to be mysterious. But by mystery we do not mean the unknowable or the unreal or untrue. A mystery is a truth which is only partially revealed, like the sun behind a cloud, or the moon in one of its phases. There are no words to express completely the nature of God. We say three persons in one God, and that is the best we can do. Without doubt all our formulas will be found to be poor and shallow and inadequate when we see Him face to face. Yet the formula the Church has sanctioned is sufficient for us to live by. And anyhow the idea of three-ness in unity commends itself to reason. St. Augustine, fifteen hundred years ago, used the analogy of the fundamental Self, with its thought or word, and its will or affection. The analogy,

he said, was imperfect indeed, but it helped us to grasp the idea. So all through Nature the three-ness in unity is found. Prof. Tyndall proved by experiments with the solar spectrum that any intensely heated body emits at the same time three rays, differing in their results but forming such a unity as to be inseparable. There is first the "heat" ray, which is felt but not seen; there is secondly the "light" ray, which is seen but not felt; and there is thirdly the "actinic" ray, which is neither felt nor seen, but which is known by its chemical action upon certain substances. Yet these three are one; for no one of them can exist except in conjunction with the others.

So also in Hegel's analysis of the fact of human consciousness. There are always three factors, viz: the subject Ego, and the objected Ego, and the synthesis of the two. I and myself and self-consciousness.

Thus we grope and speculate and find analogies, which seem to light our way, although we know all the time that no finite

symbol in space and time can adequately represent the Eternal Truth.

We believe that God is Personal, that He can hear us when we call and pray to Him. We believe that He is Goodness and Love, and that these characteristics in their fulness imply relation to equals; and these relations which we call social exist within the unity of the Godhead without detracting from its absolute eternal nature. God is not a cold, isolated unit, but in the unity of the Godhead there is a fellowship of Persons, united in the bond of that perfect Love, of which the most beautiful and perfect human love is but the reflection and imitation. For, as Bishop Gore says, "Personality in man emerges out of fellowship and always involves fellowship. It is only in fellowship that we begin to realize ourselves, and the more widely we expand into fellowship the more we realize ourselves." Or, as we may say, The measure of a man's manhood is the measure of his vision. The wider are his sympathies, the more of a man he is.

And the foundation of this law is in the nature of the Most High. The Eternal Being is fellowship: and God is Love: the Love of the Father, revealed in the Son, through the Holy Spirit.

Thus, I say again, we try to think our way to God. You remember what St. Paul said to the Athenians, God made men that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being! Or, as the philosopher Lotze said: "If reason is not of itself capable of finding the highest truth, but on the contrary stands in need of a revelation, still reason must be able to understand the revealed truth, at least so far as to recognize in it the satisfying and convincing conclusion of those upward soaring trains of thought, which reason itself began, led by its own needs, but was not able to bring to an end" (quoted by Gore, p. 253).

This is the claim of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity. It does not completely unfold or explain the Nature of God—the

human mind cannot compass the Infinite—but it saves us from the deadly remoteness of Deism and the individual annihilation of Pantheism, and assures us of our right to communion with God. It enables us to see, although "through a glass darkly," how God is Love, how His Incarnation is conceivable, and how men may thereby be raised, without loss of personal identity, into conscious communion with the fulness of the divine Life, "the fulness of Him, Who filleth all in all" (Illingworth, p. 249).

To sum up the argument, we may quote the words of Archbishop D'Arcy:

"The proof of the doctrine of the Trinity remains then, for us, where it has always been. It depends upon the Christian revelation. The doctrine comes to light, whenever men accept the facts of the life of Christ, and honestly and intelligently attempt to discover the theory of the Divine Nature which is implied in them. Or, in other words, the doctrine of the Trinity is the theoretical pre-supposition of the Christian Religion" (quoted by Illingworth).

There are two or three misconceptions of Christian doctrine to which I must refer before concluding this lecture. As the Chris-

tian fathers felt and frequently declared that the language they used to express the doctrine of the Trinity was inadequate and accommodated to the limitations of human understanding, so there are words in the New Testament and the Creed which have always been understood to be symbolical, simply because they are used to describe events and happenings beyond the range of human knowledge and experience.

In order to denote the final triumph and supremacy of Christ, He is spoken of as "sitting on the Right Hand of God"; but no intelligent person took that statement in a literal sense. So, in order to describe the withdrawal of Christ, the Lord, from the visible and external order of things, they spoke of His Ascension into Heaven—because any withdrawal from the earthly sphere of life would seem to ordinary sight to be an Ascension, whether it took place at the equator or the antipodes. In like manner, our Lord's death is described as a descent into Hades; Ἅιδης, that is, the unseen; the sphere or region of departed souls;

and the use of the words "descend" and "ascend" (καταβαίνω, ἀναβαίνω) by St. Paul (Rom. X, 7, Ephes. IV, 10) is obviously intended to be symbolical and suggests the profound thought that the soul at death does not "wing its flight" to some distant place, but withdraws itself into the interior, essential, and real sphere of existence. These words were understood by the early Christian writers to be symbolical attempts to state mysterious and indescribable happenings, in the Life of their Divine Lord and Saviour. As Gregory of Nyssa said fifteen hundred years ago: "The soul is immaterial. It is not detained in a place. Hades simply means the invisible."

All such expressions in the New Testament and the Creed are absolutely and utterly different from the bold and clear-cut statement of fact by St. Luke: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judea," etc., Jesus was born of a Virgin in Bethlehem.

It seems strange that good men should

try to discredit the doctrinal statements of the Church by ignoring the essential difference between the kinds of events that language is used to describe and by the wholesale depreciation of the intelligence of the early Christian writers. As Bishop Gore has shown conclusively, the great minds of antiquity, like Clement and Origen and the Gregories and Jerome and Augustine, were not committed to mere childish notions of Heaven and Hell as particular localities in space. Indeed, St. Jerome ridicules these childish notions and says: "It is nonsense to say that heaven is curved like an arch, and that a throne is placed in heaven and that God sits upon it as a commander or judge."

The whole question resolves itself into the ancient problem of the will to believe. There is no such thing as the dry light of reason; but every human is subject to pre-possessions: "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though One rose from the dead."

Only the Holy Spirit can touch and

quicken the minds and hearts of those who have allowed themselves to drift into an attitude of indifference, of inertia, of agnosticism, with regard to the spiritual values and facts of life. Their assumption is, that God and immortality are negligible subjects of discussion and hopeless enigmas, as a recent writer calls them; that their exceptional knowledge of the universe justifies them in denying the possibility of the direct manifestation of the Divine Will in human affairs, and all their thoughts and acts are really based on this assumption; whereas St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (I Cor. II. 2).

And so we Christians build our thoughts and lives on faith; the faith that God did reveal Himself in and through Jesus Christ, that Jesus is God Incarnate, and that His love and mercy and truth and justice are the manifestation of God's nature and character.

We start with this prepossession, and it colors and affects all our thoughts and con-

clusions and judgments. Philosophy and science may expand and enrich the content of our faith, but they cannot supply nor change the basis of it. That is fixed. As Browning says:

"I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.
Wouldst thou improve this, to re-prove the proved?
In life's mere minute, with power to use that proof,
Leave Knowledge and revert to how it sprung?
Thou hast it: Use it, and forthwith: or die."

This is no mere intellectual system, no occult or formal philosophy. It is simple enough for the untutored mind to grasp and live by, while it is deep enough to engage and satisfy the mind of the greatest genius on the earth. And men and women and little children, who are ignorant, as this world counts ignorance, and who yet practise self-denial and endure suffering patiently, and live nobly, for His sake and for love of Him Who died to save them, have at-

tained a height of spiritual knowledge which is oft hid from the wise and prudent but is revealed unto babes.

And here arises the inevitable divergence of the Christian mind from the non-Christian mind along all the paths of knowledge and critical research.

The Christian, for example, cannot discuss human immortality as an open question, and therefore he finds it difficult to combat theories and systems and modes of thought, which today covertly but actually assume the denial of this elementary and fundamental truth.

In the same way, the Christian believer sees no contradiction of his faith in the use of his reason to discriminate between the human and the divine elements in the Bible, and can only be amazed to see the results of his critical research take on new and strange and deadly significance, when exploited by men who have no convictions to begin with, and who enter upon the investigation with a strong prepossession against

any kind of revelation through Christ or anyone else, and in fact against the spiritual and eternal order of the world.

So the will to believe or the will not to believe will affect our interpretation of any fact of human experience or testimony, independently of the use of minds of equal caliber, whether it be the Virgin Birth, or the Resurrection, or the Ascension, or the doctrine of the Trinity.

So St. John says to us, "Try the spirits," and he is not speaking of disembodied spirits, but of men and women who may claim to have the spirit. "Try the spirits whether they are of God." "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

That is the test today, as it was in the beginning, and its modern value is illustrated by the fact that the most recent religion in America definitely rejects it.

Brethren: We are here for a time. The days tarry, but the years fly swiftly. Soon for each one of us all problems will be solved, all perplexities will be banished by

the fact of death. Therefore we shall live and work by this assurance: This is life, eternal life, "to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent."

God grant that life's experience here, whether it be bright or dark, or glad or sorrowful, may be to us the increasing revelation of His unutterable compassion:

"O Thou great Friend to all the sons of men
Who once appeared in humblest guise below,
Sin to rebuke, to break the captive's chain,
And call Thy brethren forth from want and woe;
We look to Thee; Thy Truth is still the Light
Which guides the nations, groping on their way,
Stumbling and falling in disastrous night,
Yet hoping ever for the perfect day."

LECTURE V

THE SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM

IT will appear from the preceding lectures that the Christian religion centers in one great dogma—the Incarnation of God in Christ. It is pre-eminently the religion of a Person. Mohammedanism is the religion of a Book—the Koran. Buddhism is the religion of a method. But Christianity is the loyal devotion and obedience to One Person, Jesus Christ, who, in a unique sense, is both the Son of God and the Son of Man. He is the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His Person, and He was made man for us. He spake as never man spake. He uttered the ultimate word. There has been no important religious truth in any age that is not contained in the brief record of His life. It is enough for us Christians to know that whatever we are asked to believe comes to us with the authority of Christ.

Moreover, it is His unique claim which separates Him from all other religious teachers of history, that He came into the world, not merely to be an example of good life for us to follow, and not merely to lay down His life on our behalf, but above and beyond either of these He came to impart His life to us. I came, He said, that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly. "I am the Vine; ye are the branches. Abide in Me and I in you." "I am the Bread of Life." "He that eateth Me even he shall live by Me."

This impartation of Christ's life is the distinctive dynamic of the Christian religion. Many other teachers have taught beautiful and noble truths, but Jesus alone declares that He communicates His life to men. Therefore, His religion acts upon the whole man—body, soul, and spirit—and affects the whole of life. It brings to bear upon those who have faith to receive it, forces from outside, forces that we did not invent, forces that are stronger than we are; and the Church from the first age has taught that

the normal and authorized way by which, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, these forces are brought to bear upon men's lives, is the Sacramental System. It is not said that the sacraments are the only way by which the Spirit operates; but that they are the normal and ordinary way.

It was Christ Himself Who, with the most solemn words, instituted the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion. His last command was, "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost"; and on the night before His Passion, He instituted the Holy Communion, saying, "Do this in remembrance of Me." St. John's Gospel does not report the institution of either sacrament, but takes them for granted and supplements the record, giving us the discourse with Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom," and the discourse at Capernaum, "I am the Bread of Life. * * He that eateth Me even he shall live by Me." So St.

Paul Speaks of the "Laver of Regeneration," and tells us "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." And the unvarying reverence for these sacramental rites and their unfailing administration through all the eighteen hundred years of Christian history is an impregnable testimony to the truth of the Gospel record and the essential meaning of the religion, viz: the personal loyalty and devotion to the Living Christ and faith in His continuing power to help and to save.

Thus, we see that, as God's way of revealing Himself to men was through a Life that was lived under the conditions of our mortality, so the sacraments are the perpetual witnesses and guarantees of the reality and continuance of that Life, and so they have been appropriately called "the extension of the Incarnation." We notice also that both these sacraments, instituted by Christ, are social rites, implying a social system, and therefore we are not surprised to find that Our Lord constantly speaks in the Gospel

about His Kingdom, a Kingdom right here on this earth, composed of men and women; like a net, He says, "containing fish both bad and good"; or like a field, where the tares and wheat grow together until the harvest. A Church, divine in its origin, but human in its administration.

It is all of one piece and perfectly clear to those who want to see it. "First," the social institution, the fellowship one with another in Christ, with all that flows out of that. Then the two social sacraments, viz: Baptism, which makes us members of the Body, the Church, and Communion, which commemorates the great sacrifice of unselfish love and keeps up the life-giving process in the Body. And this fits in with and explains St. Luke's description in the Acts of the beginning of the infant society: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls," and "The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved"; and those who were baptized continued daily in the Apostles' teaching

and fellowship, in the Breaking of Bread, and the Prayers.

Here we have the whole Christian system in one sentence: The Apostles' "teaching": That is the Creed, the "form of sound words," as St. Paul calls it, "the faith once delivered" of St. Jude. The "Fellowship": That is the Church, the ordered, organized, administered society of baptized men and women. The "Breaking of Bread" is the Holy Communion, and the "Prayers," the Public Worship.

And what began on that Day of Pentecost has continued ever since, and it is fair to say that the very forms of prayer in which the sacraments were administered then are in use now, as they have been for more than eighteen hundred years.

It has been well said by a recent writer (Dr. S. C. Carpenter, "A Large Room," p. 62): "It is certain that in the early days of Christianity, the converts of the period, certainly the Gentile and to some extent the Jew, would not have understood or accepted a non-sacramental faith." "The Christian Re-

ligion," says Dr. Adolf Harnack ("Expans. of Christianity," p. 286), "was intelligible and impressive owing to the fact that it offered men sacraments. . . . Every hand that was stretched out for religion, tried to grasp it in a sacramental form. And the two most sublime spiritualists of the Church, namely St. John and Origen, were the two most profound exponents of the Mysteries."

This would seem to be enough to justify and enforce the Church's insistence upon the reverence due to the sacraments and the reality of the sacramental life; but it is worth while to consider for a few moments the wider meaning of this idea of Sacrament, and the interpretation of human life and work that it implies.

The group of so-called "intellectuals" who are trying to discredit historical Christianity today are for the most part bald materialists and are advocates of the pseudo-scientific creed, viz: that humanity is progressing towards some undefined goal by an

impersonal, mechanical process called evolution. But the temptation of religious men is to Dualism. Dualism is one of the oldest cults in history. It is essentially the belief in the necessary contrariety of matter and spirit, and therefore the separation of the material world from God. It manifests itself in many ways. In some cases it means the denial of the possibility of God, the good spirit, acting through matter which is evil. So the early Gnostics, a quasi-Christian sect, said that the God of the Old Testament was an evil Being, because He created the physical universe; and the modern cult called Christian Science refuses to admit the Incarnation of God in Christ on the ground that God could not come into such close contact with evil matter. This Dualistic conception shows itself in the English Deism of the Eighteenth Century which divorced God from His world, in Mohammedanism and the extreme forms of Calvinism, and in the various phases of Manicheism, which seeks to build the good life upon negations by an ascetic prohibition of certain forms of

amusement and physical enjoyment. Dualism, in all its forms, denies in greater or less degree the compatibility, the correspondence, of matter and spirit, and in so doing it contradicts the most obvious fact of human knowledge.

For we are ourselves the first object of human knowledge; and we know ourselves to be spiritual beings acting through and by means of physical bodies; and can anyone say which part of the body is the most spiritual part? It is the soul that perceives, that feels, by means of the physical senses. It is the soul that reasons by means of the physical brain: and every emotion of the soul and every thought involves the activity of some material cell.

How foolish it is to talk about the necessary contradiction and incompatibility of matter and spirit. Indeed, Modern Science has virtually proved that the physical world is only the manifestation of energy or force. The Aristotelian conception of matter as material substance no longer obtains in physics, and the X-Ray, the electron, and

the radio-activity, have changed our ideas of physical energy and action. With the Einstein dynamics, matter has disappeared, and the electromagnetic mass and energy have become interchangeable. (See Dr. Osborn Taylor, p. 225.) To my mind, the conclusion is inescapable that the universe, so far from being the result of a blind, irrational chance, is the manifestation everywhere of force, and we know force as will, and the universe is the result, the manifestation of a rational Personality. The best science is coming to this conviction.

Anyhow, historic Christianity has always repudiated Dualism and sees God as immanent in His universe; not confined to the universe, as the Pantheist would say; not separated from the universe, as the Dualist would say; but acting in and through His physical universe. God is Love: and Love is the sacrifice, the "out"going of self; and the universe is the utterance, the "out"-erance, of God. God acting is God uttering—"out"-ering Himself. So St. John speaks of the Utterance of God—the Logos, the Word, by

Whom all things were made. Not another God, but the utterance of the One God, as my word is the utterance of my thought. As St. Paul says, God's dear Son, Who is before all things, and by Whom all things consist. The Spirit of Christ is the dynamic force of the physical world. Or, as Mrs. Browning, with poetic insight, reminds us:

"Natural things and spiritual!
Who separates these two
In Art or Morals or in Social drift
Paints futile pictures, writes unreal verse,
Leads vulgar days, deals ignorantly with men—
Is wrong in short at all points.
No lily-muffled hum of summer bee
But finds some coupling with the spinning stars;
No pebble at our feet but proves the sphere;
No chaffinch but implies the cherubim.
For Earth is crammed with Heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes."

This is the sacramental idea in Christianity. It ennobles science; it exalts literature; it glorifies art. It is the transfiguration of our common human life.

For life itself is a sacrament, the obliga-

tion and opportunity of proving our divine origin and destiny. The poet says that life is the opportunity of learning love, of showing love, and that is nothing more nor less than showing forth the unselfish life of Christ. As the Apostle tells us, "That was the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world"; and again, "Know ye not that Christ dwelleth in you," For "Christ is in you, the hope of glory."

This is the problem that every man and woman must face, viz: whether we shall permit our spiritual aspiration to be choked and smothered, and the Christ Who is in us be crucified and defeated, or whether we shall encourage and develop our spiritual nature, and let the Christ in us—our own Christ—have free course and be glorified in our life and thought.

"The truth is within ourselves:
There is an inmost center in us all
Where Truth abides in fulness,
And around it, wall upon wall,
The gross flesh hems it in and makes all error,
And to know would rather seem to be

To open up a way for the imprisoned splendor to
escape;
For men have oft grown old among their books
To die case-hardened in their ignorance."

St. Paul says that "The whole creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," that is, for the sons of God to acknowledge and show themselves to be the sons of God; and when all the sons of God shall show themselves to be the sons of God, then shall the Kingdom come and the glory of the Lord our God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Just as the Incarnation was the visible manifestation and sacrament of God's nature under the conditions of human life, so the visible Church is intended to be the sacrament, the manifestation of the divine ideal in human society.

Of course this is a very lofty ideal of human life, far removed from that fatalistic materialism and agnosticism that would make us mere brutes and clods. And we may well ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Therefore the Catholic Church has wisely

invested every important relation and event of life with a sacramental significance. When the baptized child has come to years of discretion and must repeat for himself the baptismal vows and renew the baptismal gift, there is the sacramental rite of Confirmation. When a man and woman, "soberly, discreetly, advisedly, and in the fear of God," unite their lives in the holy estate of matrimony, it is more than a mere civil contract. It is a solemn commitment and pledge to mutual unselfish service by the grace of God. They twain become one flesh. When a man, moved by the Holy Spirit, honestly believing that he is called of God, makes the entire surrender of his life in order to be a minister of Christ and a steward of God's mysteries, it is the sacrament of Holy Order, fenced about and guarded with scrupulous care through all the Christian centuries—*Noblesse oblige!*

So also when the soul, in penitence and remorse for sin, seeks some visible token and assurance of God's forgiveness, or when in its last agony the soul in awful solitude sees

the windows of death wide open and is about to solve the mystery of the eternal and everlasting order, the Church is there with the message of the sacramental meaning and significance of our human life.

The public worship of the Church is designed and ordered so as to keep before our minds and bring home to our hearts these exceeding precious promises of blessing and help.

That worship is the assertion of our high birthright and privilege as children of God, coming into His Presence with loving confidence to do Him honor. It is the acknowledgment of the brotherhood and fellowship of all men in Christ, and the acceptance of the duty and service which that implies. It is finally the renewal of and re-assertion of our spiritual interpretation of life and the cleansing and strengthening of our souls through the redeeming power of the Spirit of Christ. And all these meanings of worship center in and are set forth by the service of the Holy Communion, which is variously called, in the ancient writings, "The

Divine Liturgy," "The Lord's Supper," and "The Holy Eucharist."

From the Apostles' time until now, through all the centuries, this service has been the characteristic and distinctive act of worship of the Christian Church. Its very august and unique importance has made it a storm-center of controversy among men who have insisted on definitions; but without attempting to define how the Spirit effects the result, we know that IT is the perpetual and unfailing witness and reminder of the continuing Presence of our Living and Ascended Lord. It is the authorized trysting place where we may meet Him in quiet hours, away from the struggle and strain of our daily tasks. It is the refreshment of the soul, the assurance of His love, the gate of Heaven, the *mysterium fidei,* the mystery of faith. It is no wonder that about it and around it have gathered the finest expressions of man's genius, in music and architecture and painting and sculpture; no wonder that the Church has exercised the utmost care in the appoint-

ment of those who are authorized to administer this sacrament. It is no wonder that the speaker feels his utter inability and unworthiness to put into human language the beauty and the power of so great a mystery. Only the spirit of God can sound the depths of the things of God; and it is that Holy Spirit Who will open the eyes of our minds and quicken our understanding to see in all things bright and dark and glad and sorrowful the purposes of His unutterable compassion; Who will enable us to realize and show forth, in thought and act, the sacramental glory of our life; Who will bring the Christ to us in the sacrament and ourselves to Christ. For He is ours, and we are His, and "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

This has been beautifully expressed in Dr. Bright's Eucharistic hymn:

"And now, O Father, mindful of the love
That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's Tree,
And having with us Him that pleads above,
We here present, we here spread forth to Thee

That only Offering perfect in Thine eyes,
The one true, pure, immortal Sacrifice.

"Look, Father, look on His anointed face,
And only look on us as found in Him;
Look not on our misusings of Thy grace,
Our prayer so languid, and our faith so dim;
For lo! between our sins and their reward,
We set the Passion of Thy Son our Lord.

"And then for those, our dearest and our best,
By this prevailing presence we appeal;
O fold them closer to Thy mercy's breast!
O do Thine utmost for their souls' true weal!
From tainting mischief keep them white and clear,
And crown Thy gifts with strength to persevere.

"And so we come, O draw us to Thy feet,
Most patient Saviour, Who canst love us still!
And by this Food, so awful and so sweet,
Deliver us from every touch of ill.
In Thine own service make us glad and free,
And grant us nevermore to part with Thee."

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